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SUBJECT: SPECIAL MEDIA REPORT: INDIAN MEDIA COVERAGE OF
POTUS PRAGUE REMARKS ON NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION IN
PRAGUE

SUMMARY: Indian media were generally positive in their assessment of the President's Prague remarks on nuclear nonproliferation. The TELEGRAPH reported that President Barack Obama's April 5 address in Prague was received with relief in New Delhi. "It reflected the President's realization that cooperation, not confrontation, with India is what he needs," the paper said. Washington correspondent K.P. Nayar reported that the Prague declaration borrows heavily from an Indian "working paper" to the UN General Assembly in 2006. Arundhati Ghose, former Indian ambassador and arms control expert, told HINDUSTAN TIMES: "I don't see why today's India should object to signing the Treaty if the U.S. and China ratify it." Strategic guru C. Raja Mohan wrote in THE INDIAN EXPRESS: "As a nation that has long championed the abolition of nuclear weapons, India has every reason to welcome the new disarmament framework unveiled by US President Barack Obama in Prague." THE HINDU editorialized, "The Obama package represents a definite move forward from the insular and unilateral approach of the Bush administration on proliferation matters, even if the counterproductive use of threatening language remains the same." THE DAILY NEWS & ANALYSIS opined that "President Obama has signaled a strategic shift in global thinking and India can and should play a role in this new environment." The ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA Bengali daily welcomed America's "less belligerent" tone on nuclear issues. Meanwhile, the media also reported Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee's related statement in New Delhi the same day that India was committed to non-

proliferation, but it will not sign the NPT as it is discriminatory. END SUMMARY.

-- "RELIEF IN DELHI AS US SIGNALS SHIFT ON NUKE RED RAG"
- THE TELEGRAPH

¶1. Following is the full text of another report in April 8 independent, centrist Eastern India based English language daily THE TELEGRAPH by Washington correspondent K.P. Nayar:

¶2. (BEGIN TEXT): Washington, April 7: The speech was delivered in Prague. But its echoes are being felt in New Delhi. In his declaration to lead a global effort to eliminate all nuclear weapons, US President Barack Obama has signaled that he intends to deal with India with sensitivity and that a bilateral relationship cherished by his predecessors Bill Clinton and George W. Bush will not be squandered for any ideology. Obama said on Sunday that "my administration will immediately and aggressively pursue US ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty", but for New Delhi, his remarks on the red rag of CTBT were significant for the President's own words earlier that he ate in Prague's Hradany Square before a 20,000-plus crowd.

¶3. In a letter to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh before occupying the White House, Obama had explicitly said: "I will work with the US Senate to secure ratification of the international treaty banning nuclear weapons testing

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at the earliest practical day, and then launch a major diplomatic initiative to ensure its entry into force." Significantly missing from his speech in Prague were any references to "a major diplomatic initiative" - of which India would have been an obvious target - and efforts "to ensure its entry into force".

¶4. The CTBT cannot enter into force until India and a few other nuclear-capable countries accede to the treaty. There is relief on Raisina Hill, the seat of power in New Delhi that Obama has gone back on his threat in the letter to Singh to make an example of India in his efforts to promote nuclear non-proliferation. In his letter, Obama had actually lectured Singh on India's nuclear ambitions. "With the benefits of nuclear co-operation come real responsibilities - and that should include steps to restrain nuclear weapons programs and pursuing effective disarmament when others do so", one portion of the letter read.

¶5. For these reasons, the Indian government, which excitedly rushes to the media even when there is a short phone call from the White House or the State Department, had suppressed Obama's letter. The sensitivity shown by the US President in Prague in not being a bully on CTBT also reflects a realization after coming to power that cooperation - not confrontation - with India is what he needs if Obama's goal of universal nuclear disarmament is to be advanced.

¶6. In the light of what Obama said and did not say in Prague on Sunday, his personnel choices on non-proliferation now make sense. The White House was to have chosen Robert Einhorn, often described here as an "ayatollah" of non-proliferation, to be the under-secretary of state for arms control and international security. But the President and the secretary of state, Hillary Clinton, changed their minds and chose Ellen Tauscher, a Democratic Congresswoman from California, for the post some three weeks ago.

¶7. Like Einhorn, Tauscher also opposed the Indo-US nuclear deal and in the Congress, she voted against the so-called 123 Agreement enabling the deal and for

amendments to the Agreement that were aimed at curbing India's nuclear programs. It is now clear that while the Obama administration had to choose someone who had a record of having actively worked to advance non-proliferation, Tauscher was chosen because she was a politician who could be flexible unlike Einhorn, a stubborn strategic thinker.

¶18. Like Obama in Prague, the California politician can be expected to show flexibility in dealings with India under political direction from Obama and Clinton. A lot, of course, depends on India. Notwithstanding Obama's realpolitik in handling New Delhi, the Indians will get nothing from the US administration's guardians of non-proliferation unless they put their foot down in future nuclear negotiations and are ready to fight.

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¶19. A big challenge will unfold almost immediately after the new government is sworn in after the Lok Sabha elections.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is due to come up for review at the UN next year. Obama said on Sunday that "together, we will strengthen the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as a basis for cooperation". The next government will have to quickly decide on what its attitude towards the global NPT review will be. Especially since India will have no presence at the review conference since it is not a signatory to the treaty.

"INDIA ECHO IN OBAMA N-THUNDER" - THE TELEGRAPH

¶10. Following is an excerpt from a report in April 6 THE TELEGRAPH by Washington correspondent K.P. Nayar: (BEGIN EXCERPT) Washington, April 5 -- US President Barack Obama's landmark declaration in Prague today to lead the world into a future without nuclear weapons borrows heavily from an Indian "working paper" to the UN General Assembly in 2006 calling for exactly the same goal. In the most ambitious foreign policy initiative yet of his presidency that is still short of 100 days, Obama set a new milestone in the history of global nuclear disarmament by promising to make civilian nuclear cooperation not just India-specific, but a pillar of US foreign policy.

¶11. Obama's populist speech outlining his administration's approach to nuclear issues before a cheering, flag-waving crowd of 20,000 plus in 12 degrees temperature in the picturesque Czech capital swept clean by light early morning showers, revived memories of Jawaharlal Nehru's similarly raucous visit to Josip Broz Tito's Belgrade in 1961 where India made a historic call to the world to stop all testing of nuclear weapons.

¶12. Obama's speech in Prague left the clear impression that his nascent administration and the Indian government had discussed nuclear disarmament both at Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's meeting with the US President and during other recent occasions when New Delhi and Washington engaged each other. But Indian officials would not comment on this, obviously not wanting to steal Obama's nuclear thunder today and because of the UPA government's reluctance to inject the US or the controversial nuclear deal into the election campaign any more than they have to.

¶13. At the first encounter -- albeit informal and part of a large gathering -- between India and the Obama administration in Munich exactly 24 days after the new US president was sworn in, national security adviser M.K. Narayanan spoke extensively on the subject: "The future of nuclear weapons: is zero possible?"

¶14. Narayanan's speech at the 45th Munich Security Conference on February 13 received little attention in

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India because the subject appeared esoteric. Narayanan, in fact, was privately criticized in South Block for having wasted an opportunity offered by the highly-rated conference to make out India's case against cross-border terrorism when the attack on Mumbai in November was still fresh in the minds of the Munich audience. The Obama administration and Capitol Hill were represented in Munich at very high levels and it is clear from Obama's speech that Narayanan's inputs in Munich were noted in Washington... (END EXCERPTS)

-- "INDIA A PARTNER IN OBAMA'S N-EFFORTS?" - THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

¶15. Following is the full text of a report in April 6 independent, centrist national English language daily THE HINDUSTAN TIMES by foreign editor Amit Baruah:

¶16. (BEGIN TEXT) If US President Barack Obama is serious about reducing nuclear weapons, putting in place a global nuclear test ban and ending the production of fissile material to produce more nuclear weapons, then India will necessarily be in the frontline of such efforts. Speaking in Prague, Obama said, "...I state clearly and with conviction America's commitment to seek peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons..."

¶17. "To put an end to Cold War thinking, we will reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy... we will negotiate a new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty with the Russians this year." The US President also said his administration would "immediately and aggressively" pursue the ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which was rejected by the US Senate in 1999.

¶18. India, which has still to sign and ratify the CTBT, having acquired de facto nuclear weapon status in 1998, would have little choice but to sign the Treaty if the Senate ratifies it. "I don't see why today's India should object to signing the Treaty if the US and China ratify it," Arundhati Ghose, former Indian ambassador and arms control expert, told HT. Ghose, however, was skeptical about Obama's efforts to reduce global nuclear weapons. "I think he's forgotten that the (presidential) campaign is over. He is President of the US, which is in dire straits," she argued.

¶19. Another key area of interest is a new treaty to end the production of fissile material. "If we are serious about stopping the spread of these weapons, then we should put an end to the dedicated production of weapons-grade materials that create them," Obama said. "The basic bargain is sound: Countries with nuclear weapons will move towards disarmament, countries without nuclear weapons will not acquire them, and all countries can access peaceful nuclear energy..." he underlined.

¶20. Radha Kumar, trustee at the Delhi Policy Group, said the world would have to deal with the issue of unequal

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levels of fissile material in the possession of nuclear weapon states. On CTBT, Kumar said: "The logic is there for India to sign CTBT. But it remains to be seen what government takes power in Delhi." (END TEXT)

"WELCOMING OBAMA'S NUKE INITIATIVE" - INDIAN EXPRESS

¶21. Following is the full text of an op-ed by strategic

affairs specialist C. Raja Mohan in April 6 independent, centrist THE INDIAN EXPRESS English daily:

¶22. (BEGIN TEXT) As a nation that has long championed the abolition of nuclear weapons, India has every reason to welcome the new disarmament framework unveiled by US President Barack Obama in Prague on Sunday. President Obama's nuclear initiative is not too different from the vision articulated by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi two decades ago. There is one big difference, however, between Rajiv's nuclear action plan outlined at the United Nations in 1988, and Obama's Prague nuclear design. In the past, India was an 'outsider' demanding a voice in shaping the global nuclear rules; now New Delhi joins the debate as an 'insider' and a responsible nuclear weapon power.

¶23. The changed relationship between India and the global order is indeed the principal benefit from the Indo-US nuclear deal that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh conceived and implemented along with the US President George W. Bush during 2005-08 against great political odds. In recent months, there has been some concern in New Delhi that the Obama Administration might seek to reverse the gains of the nuclear deal and return to a non-proliferation agenda that could once again divide India and the United States.

¶24. As it awaits a detailed briefing from Washington on the president's nuclear plan, the first look at Obama's plan suggests that there may be the basis for significant Indo-U.S. cooperation on nuclear arms control and non-proliferation. India has always supported the three enduring traditional elements of this framework reaffirmed by Obama in Prague: responsibility of the United States and Russia for massive nuclear cuts, ending all nuclear testing, and a ban on the production of nuclear weapons material.

¶25. To be sure, the CTBT (the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty banning all nuclear explosions) and the FMCT (the Fissile Materials Cut-off Treaty that caps the size of global stockpile of nuclear material) have acquired negative connotations in India in recent years. India never objected to the essence of the two treaties that it has championed since the middle of the last century. New Delhi wants to make sure they don't discriminate against India. As Indo-US differences on these treaties narrow, India will be free to mobilize international support on the one new challenge that concerns it most--nuclear terrorism.

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¶26. As it confronts on its western borders the epicenter of international terrorism, the Wal-Mart of illicit nuclear trade, and the prospect of a failed state armed with nuclear weapons, India has every incentive to work with the United States in strengthening international cooperation to prevent extremist groups from acquiring atomic materials and weapons. India can be even more enthusiastic in supporting Obama's ideas on promoting the use of civil nuclear energy to mitigate the threat of global warming, providing fuel supply assurances to those nations that play by the rules, and creating new international institutions that reduce the risk of nuclear weapons proliferation. (END TEXT)

"OBAMA AND A NUCLEAR-FREE WORLD" - THE HINDU

¶27. Following is the full text of an editorial in April 7 Leftist-influenced South India based English daily THE HINDU:

¶28. (BEGIN TEXT) The headline of a nuclear-free world was so catchy that few who followed Barack Obama's speech in

Prague on Sunday would have paid attention to the American President's disclaimer that such a goal was probably not achievable in his lifetime. Mr. Obama is not even 50 yet. Life expectancy being what it is these days, his prediction effectively means the world can forget about the United States military ending its dependence on weapons of mass destruction for at least the next half century.

¶29. For the interim, however, Mr. Obama made three promises. First, he would reduce the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. national security strategy. Secondly, he was committed to the "immediate and aggressive pursuit" of Senate ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty as the first step towards pushing for the CTBT's entry into force. Thirdly, a verifiable ban on the dedicated production of fissile material for the manufacture of nuclear weapons would be a top priority. A few days earlier, Mr. Obama and his Russian counterpart, Dmitry Medvedev, announced their intention of negotiating a new strategic arms reduction treaty.

¶30. At Prague, the U.S. President also said he would press other nuclear weapon states to make cuts in their arsenals. In exchange for these commitments or announcements, none of which is necessarily new, he laid down that the rules governing proliferation had to be tightened. He added, in the context of North Korea's satellite launch that countries which refused to play by the rules would have to be punished.

¶31. Taken together, the Obama package represents a definite move forward from the insular and unilateral approach of the Bush administration on proliferation matters, even if the counterproductive use of threatening language remains the same. American ratification of the CTBT would be a step forward but this step would be meaningful only if Washington were to end all work on the

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design and refinement of new nuclear weapons, whether of the "mini nuke" or the Reliable Replacement Warhead variety. India, which will find itself under pressure on the CTBT front sooner or later, needs to be proactive in emphasizing the crucial importance of nuclear disarmament. The basic argument for possessing nuclear weapons is provided by deterrence theory - a dangerous and false doctrine.

¶32. The stark truth is that the possessor of nuclear weapons stands committed to threatening to perform, and to actually performing, under certain extreme circumstances, insane genocidal actions that must never be countenanced. Even if abolition will take time, there is no reason why all nuclear weapon states cannot sign a treaty banning the use, or at least the first use, of this genocidal instrument of war. Such an agreement would do more to prevent their use than the promise of abolishing nuclear weapons by the middle of this century. If he is serious about his stated goal, Mr. Obama should be thinking of the time horizon of his present elected tenure, not of a lifetime. (END TEXT)

"NUCLEAR SHIFT" -- DAILY NEWS & ANALYSIS (DNA):

¶32. Following is an excerpt from an editorial in April 6 centrist, independent Mumbai-based English daily DAILY NEWS & ANALYSIS (DNA):

¶33. (BEGIN EXCERPT) It is an ironic coincidence indeed that the North Korea test-fired their long range missile -- though Pyongyang claimed that it was just a satellite launch vehicle -- which splashed into the sea off Japan just around the time US president Barack Obama was declaring in Prague that he would like to get the world rid of nuclear weapons.

¶34. Obama's statement is not just one more glimpse of the new leader's idealism though it is that too. There are strategic compulsions as well. The American strategic thinkers seem to be veering round to the view that it is difficult to maintain a credible nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT) regime with rogue states like North Korea refusing to play by the rules.... This kind of a potentially unstable situation emphasizes the need for more urgency on the debate on nuclear disarmament, which had become dormant for some time. Obama realizes that this is not an achievable goal during his presidential term or even after that. He said it may not even happen in his lifetime. The important fact is that this radical shift in perception has occurred and it can now be taken forward. It will be years before it will be accepted by all but it is still a welcome change....

¶35. In the last 18 years or so, India's principled stance over nuclear disarmament has been thrown out of the window in favor of thinking more attuned to hard global realities. There ought not to be any contradictions between the two. This would also help India to strengthen India-US strategic relationship on the peace axis. Obama

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has signaled a strategic shift in global thinking and India can and should play a role in this new environment.
(END EXCERPT)

"NOT A WEAPON OF CHOICE" - OP-ED IN THE TIMES OF INDIA

¶36. Following is the full text of an op-ed article in April 9 centrist, independent, national English daily THE TIMES OF INDIA by political columnist Ramesh Thakur:

¶37. (BEGIN TEXT) On Sunday, North Korea launched a long-range missile which Pyongyang described as a success but US experts said had been a failure. Of greater historical significance was the speech delivered the same day in Prague by US president Barack Obama. During the Democratic primary campaign last year, Hillary Clinton famously declared that both Senator John McCain and she had actual job experience to qualify to be commander-in-chief. All that Obama had done, by contrast, was to deliver one speech in Chicago opposing the Iraq war.

¶38. As we know, Clinton fatally underestimated the power of speech. Obama at his best combines linguistic eloquence and powerful oratory with substance and gravitas. On Sunday, he addressed one of the most critically important topics of our day that literally has life and death implications for all of us, wherever we may be. The dream of a world free of nuclear weapons is an old one. It is written into the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), which balances the prohibition on non-nuclear states acquiring these weapons with the demand on the five NPT-licit nuclear powers Britain, China, France, Russia and the US (N5) to eliminate their nuclear arsenals through good-faith negotiations.

¶39. Considering that the NPT was signed in 1968 and came into effect in 1970, the N5 have not lived up to their bargain. The dream has been kept alive by many NGOs, a coalition of like-minded countries and a plethora of international blue ribbon commissions. A major difficulty is that the abundant "zero nuclear weapons" initiatives have been stillborn because of zero follow-up and a failure to address real security concerns.

¶40. If we examine the geo-strategic circumstances of the existing nuclear powers, the two with the least zero security justification for holding on to any nuclear weapons are Britain and France. Nor can North Korea justify nuclear weapons on national security grounds. It

seems to play a nuclear hand as a bargaining chip, the only one it has. Israel's security environment is harsh enough with many in its neighborhood committed to its destruction to make its reliance on nuclear weapons understandable. Pakistan will not give up its nuclear weapons while India still has them. India's main security benchmark is not Pakistan but China. Neither China nor Russia will contemplate giving them up for fear of the US. This is why the circuit-breaker in the global nuclear weapons chain is the US.

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¶41. Obama's speech acknowledged this. The US cannot achieve the dream on its own, he said, but it is prepared to lead based on the acknowledgement of its special moral responsibility flowing from being the only power to have used atomic weapons. He thus lays down the challenge to others to follow. And he outlines concrete follow-up steps that are practical, measurable and achievable. Obama's strategy is to map out a vision and then outline the roadmap to achieve it. These include ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty negotiated way back in 1997; a new treaty banning fissile material; reducing the role of nuclear weapons in US national security strategy; and a new strategic arms reduction treaty with Russia that is bold and legally binding. Washington will also host a global summit on nuclear security within one year.

¶42. Such measures by the N5 must be matched by robust action against the proliferation threat. At the very least, Obama reclaims the moral high ground for Washington to pursue a vigorous and robust non- and counter-proliferation strategy. More resources and authority for institutions like the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Proliferation Security Initiative will be provided. Countries leaving or breaking the NPT must face real and immediate consequences. An international fuel bank could be created to assure supply to countries whose interest is limited to peaceful uses of nuclear energy. All vulnerable nuclear material around the world for example, loose nukes in Russia will be secured within four years. Black markets like A Q Khan's will be broken up, trade in nuclear materials detected and intercepted in transit, and financial tools used to disrupt dangerous trade.

¶43. Obama is right in saying that reaching the goal will require patience and persistence. But he may be wrong in saying that it may not be achieved in his lifetime. He should set down the marker for achieving it by the end of his second term if re-elected. Without a deadline, no one will work to make it happen; rather, they will retreat into the vague formula of "yes, some day, eventually".

¶44. Obama may also be mistaken in pinning faith on the global regime centered on the NPT which, he said, "could reach the point where the centre cannot hold". The NPT is already a broken reed, with far too many flaws, anomalies, gaps and outright contradictions. For example, the promise that those who break the rules must be punished cannot be enforced against India. The India-US civil nuclear agreement, however justified and necessary, breaks NPT rules. A new clean nuclear weapons convention might be a better goal to pursue. That's a minor quibble. More important is the broad sweep of Obama's commitment, based on national interest and personal conviction, to freeing us from the fear of nuclear weapons.

-- COMMENTARY IN LANGUAGE PRESS

¶45. "OBAMA'S DREAM," editorial in April 9 Chennai-based

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Tamil daily DINAKARAN: "President Obama, during his tour of Europe, advocated that international pressure may be applied to change the mindset of countries engaged in nuclear weapon production. He reached out to the Muslim world with his goodwill message and his comforting approach came as a great relief to the international community that had witnessed threats from his predecessor George Bush in similar situations. Obama also seems to be giving priority to developing new technologies to counter terrorism, rather than spending money on warships or aircrafts. This is an indication that Obama has initiated steps towards realizing his dream."

¶46. "A WEAPON-FREE WORLD?" editorial in April 7 independent Bengali daily ANANDABAZAR PATRIKA: "Obama's remarks, clearly pointing out new U.S. thinking on the nuclear issue, are totally different from those of Bush the warmonger. The tone carries no threat, browbeating, or intimidation... his nuclear policy is reflective of his goodwill in building multifaceted and multilateral relations with several countries, and it shows that he is not merely led by Pentagon advisors."

"INDIA WILL NOT SIGN NPT IN PRESENT FORMAT" - NEWS REPORTS

¶47. On April 5, India's External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee spelled out India's stand on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Following is a news report in THE HINDU April 6:

¶48. (BEGIN TEXT) NEW DELHI: External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee has reiterated India's commitment to non-proliferation but said New Delhi would not sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in its present format as it is discriminatory and in favor of the nuclear weapon states. "Our position is very clear. We are totally in agreement that those who are signatories to the NPT, they must fulfill their treaty obligations. Because of this discriminatory nature, we are not signatories, but with the objectives of non-proliferation, we are with the rest of the world," he told journalists here on Sunday.

¶50. "We are second to none in propagating non-proliferation but we did not sign the NPT and we do not have any intention of signing the NPT because we disagree with the objective. We disagree with the gross discrimination which these treaties make between nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states," he added. He said nobody else other than the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) could judge whether the NPT signatories were fulfilling their treaty obligations. "IAEA is the appropriate watchdog body in this area," he said.
BURLEIGH